

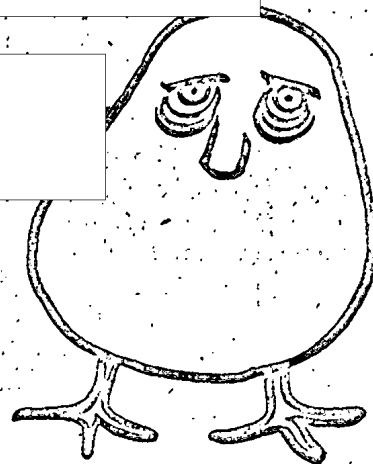
the magazine of wrongeous indignation

STAT

The Realist

February, 1967

35 Cents



Lenny Bruce, Tim Leary and the Search for Alienation —or, Which Deodorant Does Lyndon Johnson Use?

by Paul Krassner

I don't know where to begin.

The radio announced, "A sick comic came to a sick end last night. . . ."

Just another news item.

But consider the audacity of a man who would stand on a night club stage—the Gate of Horn in Chicago, December 1962, Lenny Bruce at the peak of his

career—request all lights off except one dim blue spot, ask his audience to have compassion for Adolf Eichmann, and then *become* him, continuing in a German accent:

"My name is Adolf Eichmann. And the Jews came every day to what they thought would be fun in the showers. . . . People say I should have been hung. *Nein*. Do you recognize the whore in

the middle of you—that you would have done the same if you were there yourselves? My defense: I was a soldier. I saw the end of a conscientious day's effort. I watched through the portholes. I saw every Jew burned and turned into soap. Do you people think yourselves better because you burned your enemies at long distance with mis-

(Continued on Page 23)



Speak No Evil



See No Evil



Smell No Evil

The Murder of Malcolm X

by Eric Norden

Shortly after 3 p.m. on Sunday, February 21, 1965 Malcolm X walked onto the stage of the Audubon Ballroom at 166th Street and Broadway. The audience of some 400 Negroes and a half-dozen self-conscious whites stirred in anticipation.

At the podium Benjamin X, an officer of Malcolm's

introductory speech. "And now, brothers and sisters, here is a man willing to lay down his life for you!"

The applause was thunderous.

Malcolm walked slowly to the rostrum. His face was strained, tired, and his step lacked its usual spring. He held up his right hand. "A salaam alaikem," he said in a hoarse voice. "Peace be unto you."

"Wa alaikem salaam," some 400 voices responded in unison. "And unto you peace."

The tense silence awaiting Malcolm's opening words was suddenly shattered. "Nigger, get your hands out of my pocket!" a man's voice shouted from the middle

25 JULY 1965

The Rise of An Outrageous Magazine

by Liz Smith

Satire, as everyone knows, is a losing proposition, and efforts in that area are measured by the ability to stay alive. By this standard, a curious, cultish almost-monthly magazine called *The Realist* is a smash hit. Its circulation has soared since its beginning, in 1958, from a nucleus of 600 to a coterie of almost 50,000. Although no goldmine for its editor-publisher Paul Krassner, it is self-supporting, and has lately begun the startling practice of occasionally paying contributors worthwhile rates.

What started out as an obscure pulpy-looking little periodical published in the shadow of police headquarters at Centre and Broome Streets, with an often adolescent, college humor, youth-in-revolt attitude, has now turned into a still pulpy-looking but increasingly attention-getting organ of iconoclastic satire, criticism and trenchant wit. *The Realist* is now being taken seriously and is resoundingly discussed on college campuses, among the literati, and wherever the elite hip meet to bleat against censorship, conformism, commercialism, hypocrisy, Victorian prudery, outmoded laws, irrational sex codes and "selling out." It is also viewed with alarm by outraged parents, preachers, priests, politicians, corporate boards, educators and possibly the U. S. Postal authorities as a good example of what the world's coming to. (Krassner claims his magazine is being investigated by postal authorities in eight states who are trying to classify it as "obscene matter." He also believes he is under investigation by the FBI in order to determine the role of *The Realist* in the nationwide student rebellion.)

Public comment about *The Realist* has been curiously oblique. The *San Francisco Chronicle* said, "Any magazine that's against as many things as *The Realist*, can't be all bad." The *Dallas Morning News* noted that the editor's "cynicism will seem pristine to anyone acquainted with the Book of Ecclesiastes." One critic commented that at first he thought the editor, Krassner, was "just a bad imitation Lenny Bruce, but lately, I think he's damn funny on his own. He might make it to jail yet." George Lincoln Rockwell, the American Nazi chief, told Krassner personally, "You are one of the Jews that is going to make it hard to gas the rest of them."

The Realist is an almost outcast publication specializing in putting into print the kind of sexual, religious, racial and political jokes being told over office desks and at cocktail parties—a magazine that can devote an entire issue to feces, then call it "experimental journalism"—a magazine that blatantly throws open its pages to the editorial remarks of super-atheist Madalyn Murray or the Nazi Rockwell and advises readers canceling subscriptions to be sure and include their Zip Codes—a magazine so anti-religious it takes on Jews, Catholics, Buddhists and Protestants alike—a

magazine dedicated to the right of everyone to have his prurient interests aroused—a magazine that is, naturally, against any form of censorship in print, speech, film or, I presume, graffiti—a magazine that thinks nothing of repeating a "sick" joke about Jews being turned into bars of soap—a magazine whose idea of an ambivalent gag is to put out for sale red, white and blue posters with a four-letter Anglo-Saxon imperative followed by the word "Communism"—a magazine that shows Lucy of the "Peanuts" cartoon strip obviously pregnant and saying, "Good grief, Charlie Brown!"—a magazine that prints a satirical sex education manual for Catholic children that offends Catholics and non-Catholics alike by its brutal choice of words—a magazine that draws the U.S.S.R. and Uncle Sam as two dirty old men taking advantage of a blousy sexy female World—a magazine that notes Little Orphan Annie's 40th birthday and suggests she now learn the word "menopause" from her doctor—a magazine that claims the Anti-Defamation League will protest the showing of a film about the life of Christ to be titled, "I Was A Teen-Age Jew"—a magazine that slaps slogans like "Pray for War" or "Help Put Commerce Back In Christmas" on its front page—a magazine pointing out that The Visible Man anatomy toy has no reproductive organs—a magazine showing Christ as a mystery guest on "What's My Line?" and discussing whether or not He works for a profit-making organization—a magazine that has been described as "an avant-garde combination of smut and social criticism."

Although the magazine has moved away from its proximity to police headquarters, the physical shift of the magazine's offices to the ground floor of a brownstone duplex at 318 East 18th Street in the artistically-seething new bohemia of today's East Village isn't really so much of an upward step. However, *The Realist* itself has become much more than just those naughty taglines in the opening paragraphs. Though these same sexual, religious, political and racial irreverencies continue to be the spice of its editorial life, it is becoming increasingly apparent that Krassner's abiding philosophy (borrowed from Byron) has meaning for our time. The philosophy is: "And if I laugh at any mortal thing, 'tis that I may not weep."

But what about Krassner himself, a man who in these wildly lenient times manages via his magazine to stand out as a genuine non-conformist, among the great crowds of non-conformists clotting the American cultural and political scene.

Like that other doughty American iconoclast, H. L. Mencken, Paul Krassner comes on at first as a kind of callow cluck, hiding a high I.Q. (144) under a sensitive shyness, appearing about as sophisticated and cynical as a bottle of beer, and creating an initial downbeat impression.

Man With a No

Just inside the basement door of a New York brownstone is a small, disheveled office cluttered by largely unused filing cabinets, a garbage pail, an Exercycle, a baseball bat, an electric typewriter, and a desk barely visible under its owner's editorial debris. On the wall near the desk hangs a silver medallion inscribed: "In case of accident please call a rabbi, minister, and a priest ... I'm hedging my bets."

Beneath the medallion last week, in black chinos and a worn white polo shirt, sat Paul Krassner, who is not hedging his bets at all. At 32, he is the founder, editor, and sole mover of *The Realist*, a sometimes sophomoric, often significant, frequently funny satirical magazine dedicated, as Krassner puts it, to "compromising as little as possible."

In its six years, *The Realist*, whose masthead mascot is a Shmoo-like creature called St. Realist, has grown, according to Krassner, from an initial circulation of 600 to 36,000. (No Audit Bureau of Circulation figures are kept because the newsprint periodical has no advertising.) At a cost of about \$3,000 an issue, *The Realist* (35 cents) is published ten times a year and sold principally in New York, Chicago, and San Francisco. Among its readers are Murray Kempton, Dick Gregory, and Steve Allen, who describes *The Realist* as "more or less the periodical equivalent of Lenny Bruce."

Satire: Like Bruce, *The Realist* seems unable to function without a certain amount of four-letter words and smut. But it is much more than that. In the current issue, for example, author Robert Paul Smith writes seriously, humorously, and unscatologically on literary censorship. ("Is Fanny Hill a dirty book? You bet your ever-loving it is.")

Besides Smith, *The Realist* has also printed Richard Condon on "How to Eliminate the Nation's Most Popular Suicide Weapon," a biting essay on cigarette

smoking in which he urges that mothers be awarded Black Stars for encouraging their children to smoke. Krassner has also run several pieces by Terry Southern, including "The Moon-Shot Scandal," the tale of an unmanly crewman aboard a manned spaceship. "You can say things in *The Realist* that you can't say in other publications," says Southern.

The Realist also likes to print verbatim words that have been said or written elsewhere. One of Krassner's prize realities is a civil-defense application card that asks if the volunteer has roller skates. "I couldn't make that up. It's a satirical extension of itself," said Krassner last week, as he happily waved the CD card. He, of course, initiates his own thrusts, too. His next issue will boost TV newsman Walter Cronkite for President.

The Realist first gained widespread attention—and notoriety—in the spring of 1962 when Krassner printed, along with a White House denial, the erroneously documented story that President Kennedy had been wed to a two-time divorcee before he married Jacqueline Bouvier. "All I really wanted to do was bring it aboveground," says Krassner, of a story that almost every major newspaper, magazine, and wire service had refused to publish for sixteen months.

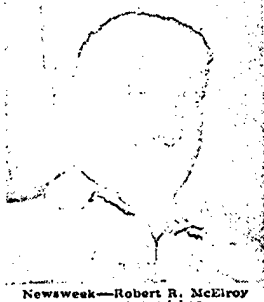
Financially, *The Realist* breaks even. To support his wife, also his main editorial assistant, and daughter, Krassner gets \$7,000 a year as a contributing editor of *Playboy* magazine. But he is not afraid to bite satirically the hand that feeds him. In an article about *Playboy* publisher Hugh Hefner, *The Realist* ran a cartoon showing a furtive form inscribing a wall with: "Hugh Hefner is a Virgin."

Krassner's background is both beat and offbeat. At 6, he played the violin at Carnegie Hall. As a teen-ager, he played the outfield for Long Island City High School. And at 22, he quit the City College of New York just three credits shy of graduation because the degree had ceased to mean anything to him.

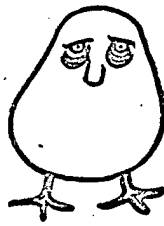
What had meaning was satire, and the first issue of *The Realist* in the summer of 1958 served as Krassner's diploma. "We have no doctrinaire policy, no ax to grind," Krassner said last week. "We are socially concerned, and to

make fun of things indicates concern."

Although Krassner's printed acres are tightly fenced against sacred cows, patches of needless, vulgar weeds often mar the field. *The Realist's* purpose would be better served if he applied the editorial hoe more frequently.



Newsweek—Robert R. McElroy



Krassner: "To make fun of things indicates concern"